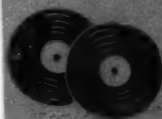


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# The American RECORD GUIDE

FOR THE AMERICAN MUSIC LOVER



AUGUST, 1949 • VOL. XV, No. 12

edited by PETER HUGH REED

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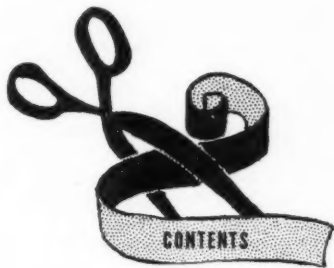
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# The American RECORD GUIDE



August, 1949 • Vol. XV, No. 12

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## Which Way The Wind?

### EDITORIAL NOTES

Two more major record concerns will issue long-playing recordings. These are the London Gramophone Corporation (which is now distributing English Decca FFRR recordings) and Capitol Records. The first issues of long-playing records—made from the FFRR releases—are due this month, and we hope to include in our pages reviews of some of these. Glenn Wallich, president of Capitol, announces "as a response to the demands of record buyers and dealers" that his company's issues of Telefunken records will be made available on 33 rpm. discs in September.

Capitol Records is already committed to issue 45 rpm. records, and, according to its latest announcement, these will be forthcoming in the near future. It is of interest to note that Capitol is the first concern to offer 78s, 45s and 33s. One recently retired official of Capitol told us that the clamor of dealers for a long-playing disc prompted their action to get on the 33 bandwagon. The public's response to 45s, he confessed, was disheartening though (in his personal viewpoint) completely understandable. It is persistently rumored (and most assuredly widely hoped) that the "speed battle" between the leading record manufacturers in this country will soon end. We are led to believe by rumor that each of the major domestic companies will shortly reproduce all three types of records — the standard 78, the long-playing 33, and the controversial 45. How long the latter disc will survive public response is uncertain. There is, however, no question that the long-playing disc has come to stay, and it may well be the dominating factor in the survival of the record business.

The first pre-recorded tape, perhaps a serious competitor to discs in the coming years, has been issued by Amplifier Corporation of America. The initial release offers 14 reels, made up from Vox and French Polydor recordings. The reels of-

fer one hour of music, and sell for \$6.95 each. The performances are hardly exciting. Many of them were made by Albert Wolff and the Lamoureux Orchestra more than 20 years ago. The recently recorded items include performances made by Klemperer, von Karajan, Schuricht, Thibaud-Gaby Casadesus and Goehr. Familiarity with these in disc form leaves us unexcited with their advent on pre-recorded tape, as all of the original recordings were made with pre-war equipment with a limited frequency range.

To return to the "speed battle" and its possible termination. In an article, appearing recently in the *Wall Street Journal*, Joseph M. Guilfoyle makes this statement:

"Against a background of declining sales, top officials of the big three disc makers — Columbia, Decca, RCA Victor — have been quietly meeting in a New York hotel seeking to end the chaos which has gripped the industry since the introduction of Columbia's 'long-playing' and RCA's new saucer-size records."

"At best," says Guilfoyle, "the record buying public can only expect a compromise by the three companies." But rumor, that "great traveller," intimates the conference is not going too well and that RCA-Victor is losing its "enthusiasm for the compromise 'peace'." It is said that one man in RCA—undoubtedly a top-notch official—is bitterly opposed to any compromise. It is a pity that the voluminous correspondence of record buyers and dealers, received by this periodical, could not be put into his hands. The "theme song" of that pile of letters is "when will Victor bring out a long-playing disc?" The bitter comments and excessive criticism in those letters would, however, probably antagonize rather than do good. For little of it can be dispassionately viewed or regarded as constructive criticism.

### The Worthiness of L. P.

On one point all correspondents are in agreement with your editor, that the long-playing disc is one of the most worthwhile advancements in the art of recording. "Even RCA must realize by now," says the *Wall Street Journal*, "that there's little chance for a quick, clear-cut victory for either side in the record battle. For one thing, Columbia's 'L.P.' record is gaining ground all the time. In the year since its

introduction, Columbia has sold some 3,500,000 'long-playing' records. Nearly a million 'L.P.' players are now in the hands of the public." True, RCA's 45 has not been out long enough, nor are there anywhere near the same number of players in the hands of record buyers. Had RCA considered making its wafer disc  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch wider and used the standard slow speed of 33 rpm, there is just reason to believe that these records would be selling in larger quantities. For the standard slow speed has been 33rpm for many years — a speed, by the way, which RCA employed itself and, if we are informed correctly, was first introduced to the record field by this concern. No matter what arguments are advanced — the speed of 45 rpm. is a completely arbitrary one. Despite all the bally-hoo and advertising behind the 45 rpm, which seeks to justify the company's reason for adopting this speed, the majority of the public feel it was chosen to spite a major competitor.

Yet, as we have previously pointed out in these columns, there is just reason to believe that RCA's new speed disc was in the works a long time, possibly as long as the Columbia long-playing record, and alteration of its 45 plans would have entailed major reconversions.

### An L. P. for Victor

The fact that more and more companies are turning to long-playing records would seem just reason for RCA considering such a disc of its own. There are countless superior performances in the Victor catalogue which would be most welcome on long-playing discs.

Few, who have exposed themselves to the uninterrupted performance from a long-playing disc would deny the advantages of hearing a symphony, a concerto, a string quartet, or an operatic performance unbroken by changer mechanism. That the long-playing record will in time develop more direct listening is a foregone conclusion which has been conclusively proved by your editor in recent lecturing to various educational and society groups.

The *Wall Street Journal* says that "in a struggle of the type in which Columbia and RCA have been locked, 'Face-saving' and prestige are extremely important in any compromise." Granted this is true, it seems to us that RCA's prestige would be

(Continued on page 361)



## RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS

*By Edward Sackville West*

IT IS IDLE to speculate about the eventual position, outside his own country, of a contemporary composer whose work is not yet finished. Strongly national characteristics seem to cut both ways: Massenet, Reger, Bruckner remain uncertain "draws," Bizet, Moussorsky, Brahms are in better case. It is a question not so much of originality, or of emotional range, as of vocabulary. Whether verbal or musical, vocabulary is transmitted by precept, but it can be transformed out of recognition by the choices and rejections of an exclusive temperament. I can think of no composer—unless it be Debussy—in which an uncompromising taste has produced a vocabulary more markedly individual than that of Vaughan Williams.

In the hands of many lesser men the modal tradition in English music has thinned down to a steady trickle of pentatonic wish-wash. In this form bad English music is demonstrably less vulgar than the bad music of any other country (with the possible exception of Holland); on the

other hand, it is more soporific, more utterly nugatory.

On the continent of Europe few critics have troubled to distinguish between Vaughan Williams himself and the feeble composers who have annexed the tricks of his style. And perhaps, it is true that without some knowledge of England, and of English habits of mind, it is difficult to get beyond admiration for Vaughan Williams' musicianship—for at least it must be conceded that he has complete command over his style. This is not saying very much; a case must be made for the style itself, which, at its most characteristic, is not remarkable for grace or politeness or inventive color. In place of these attractions it is admirably fitted to portray a consistent vision in which thought and feeling and image never fall below a certain high level of natural distinction.

This vision has two contrasted moods, the one contemplative and trance-like, the other pugnacious and sinister. On the

whole, the first mode has been more in evidence than the second, and of course it is more beloved of audiences, who lend themselves willingly to the stained-glass glow of the *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis* (B.B.C. Sym. Orch., Boulton Victor set 769; HMV DB3758/59—Minneapolis Sym. Orch., Mitropoulos; Columbia set MX-300), the raptures of the *Serenade to Music* (16 solo Singers, B.B.C. Sym. Orch., Henry Wood; (Dom. Col. set MX-121, Eng. Col. LX757/58), and the similar charm of the *Oboe Concerto* (Mitchell Miller, Saidenberg Little Sym., Mercury set DM-7). On the other hand, audiences have been inclined to jib at the *Fourth Symphony in F minor* (B.B.C. Sym. Orch., Vaughan Williams; Victor set 440, HMV DB3367/70) and the *Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra* (not yet recorded).

It is perhaps natural to react with dismay to artistic expressions of hostility and exasperation: Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du mal*, Bartok's *Fourth Quartet*, Picasso's double profiles are alienating because — however admirable as feats of expression — they emphasize the gulf which separates the creative from the ordinary mind. This is frightening, and Vaughan Williams in his grimmer moments is frightening too, in the manner of a hawk in repose, or of some 17th-century bishop or judge whose portrait testifies to a passion for truth rather than benevolence.

### The Danger of a Formula

Like all artists who discover a convenient formula, Vaughan Williams can, on occasion, be a very dull composer. In some of his choral works (notably *Sancta Civitas*), in parts of the *Third Symphony* (*Pastoral*), of *Flos Campi* (Primrose, B.B.C. Chorus, Philharmonia Orch., Boulton; HMV DB6353/55), of *Job* (B.B.C. Orch., Boulton; HMV DB6289/93), of the *Concerto Academic* for Violin and Strings (Grinke, Boyd Neel Orch.; Decca X248/49), the flame must be said to burn low. When this happens, the texture of the score is not beautiful enough in itself, nor is the harmony sufficiently varied and ingenious, to compensate for the emptiness and pau-

city of the thematic material. I hasten to add that these strictures do not apply either to the exquisite *Oboe Concerto*, or to the *Mass in G minor*, neither of which are among the composer's most important works. Both have been released in recordings in the States; but I have not heard them, as they are not available at the time of writing in England, although the *Mass* is a Decca issue (set EDA 57). The latter belongs among Vaughan Williams's most mannered compositions, but the themes are strikingly beautiful, the part-writing superb, and the general texture very discrete. This is a work which could not but gain from frequent hearing. *The Lark Ascending* for Violin and Orchestra. (David Wise, Liverpool Phil. Orch., Sargent; Eng. Col. DX1386/87) exquisitely poetic as are its beginning and end, contrives to outstay its welcome.

### Poor Theatre

A limpy, flat-footed provincialism, the result of a contempt for anything in the nature of cosmopolitan smartness, has been the bane of English music for a century past, and Vaughan Williams has not escaped its contagion. This horror of vulgarity, with its deliberate avoidance of the immediately effective touch, is, in my view, chiefly responsible for the ineptitude of Vaughan Williams's operas, in all of which much beautiful music is rendered inert by an amateurish sense of the theater. *Riders to the Sea*, a setting of Synge's tragedy, has moments of genuine power; and *The Poisoned Kiss*, despite a puerile libretto, is full of charm and sparkle in the manner of Sullivan. But neither can properly be termed opera, in the sense in which even a piece of tinsel such as Delibes' *Lakme* indubitably deserves that name. *Sir John In Love*, acclaimed in some quarters as "an English *Meistersinger*," appears to me a failure as emphatic — if as distinguished — as Schumann's *Genoveva*. Vaughan Williams is said to have been toying for years with an opera based on *The Pilgrim's Progress*. It is possible that here he would have found a subject ideally suited to his imagination, and although none of the opera has been forth-



coming except one scene (*The Shepherds of the Delectable Mountains*), two of the composer's most moving orchestral works—the *Tallis Fantasia* and the *Fifth Symphony* Hallé Orch., Barbirolli; HMV C3388/92—are known to be based on material originally intended for it.

However, a sense of drama in music is not inseparable from opera; in a far more concentrated form it is the essence of the symphony, and it is here, I believe, that Vaughan Williams has given us his finest and most durable music. Discophiles lose little by the absence from record catalogues of the "Sea" *Symphony* (The "London" is No. 2, not No. 1, as erroneously stated in the *Encyclopedia of Recorded Music*). Both the "Sea" and the "London" (latter, Cincinnati Sym. Orch., Goossens; Victor set 916) can be criticized as laborious, noisy, and over long, although in both works the slow movement has great evocative power. The *Third Symphony* ("Pastoral") is typical of the composer at his best and worst. It is extremely mannered and there is not enough contrast between the movements; but there is great atmospheric beauty in this monochrome art. Its flavor is pervasive rather than strong. With its wide curves and cloudy spaces, its wandering voice behind the hill, it is the flavor of the landscape of southern England, and if some national disaster were to exile me from my country, this is the work which would soonest reduce me to tears of homesickness.

### A Return to Familiarities

After the angry violence of the *Fourth Symphony*, the noble and restrained poetry of the *Fifth* was a complete return to the composer's more familiar style, and some critics regarded the work as proof that Vaughan Williams had written himself out. But to me the *Fifth* seems to say more succinctly—and more wisely—what the composer began to say in his *Second* and *Third Symphonies*. The *Sixth*, which appeared in 1948, has made an overwhelming impression throughout England and is almost certain to be issued on records before long. In the massive, brooding sadness of this extremely power-

ful work Vaughan Williams unites, as never before in his career, the two modes of his imaginative life. It would seem to be a symphonic poem rather than a symphony proper, and the four movements, although clearly divided, are played without a break. A vigorous *allegro*, with a far-flung *E major* tune; an elegaic slow movement, upon which a menacing brass phrase of three repeated *B-flats* moves up, like a thunder-cloud, then retreats without bursting; a boisterous, contrapuntal Scherzo; and a mysterious Epilogue, also contrapuntal. The Epilogue, which preserves an undeviating *pianissimo* for about twelve minutes, is an astounding piece of music. The muted orchestra weaves a cat's-cradle of glassy filaments through which shines a dead white light. It is like the final echo of a vanishing world—a human cry lost in the cold of interstellar space. As Strauss in his *Metamorphosen*, so Vaughan Williams, in his *Sixth Symphony*, bids a grave and sorrowful farewell to the civilization of Christian Europe.

As this article is intended to be of a general nature, I have mentioned only the more important of the works of this composer which are available in recording. Of those not yet recorded the *Third* and *Sixth Symphonies*, the *Two Piano Concerto*, and the *Five Tudor Portraits*, are badly needed by all who prize the music of this uncompromising, profoundly English, and still widely misunderstood man of genius.

## EDITORIAL NOTES

(Continued from page 358)

in no way challenged if it decided to issue a long-playing record of its own. After all, it was RCA who first developed a longplaying record, and there are reasons to believe that the company has never discarded interest in such a disc through the years. Indeed, we are told, experiments along these lines were being conducted prior to the war. During the war, RCA had to cease all private technical developments as the company's manufac-

turing facilities were turned over to the Government for essential war work. The service rendered our Government by RCA during the war was of great importance. At this time, Columbia was in a freer position to make endless experiments in the record field, and — if we are correctly informed — it was during this period that the company developed its Microgroove disc.

### The Merits of 45

Let us consider the merits of the 45 disc. This past month we have had ample opportunity to make many tests, as RCA Victor sent us a high-fidelity model of its 45 player. The latter is equipped with a G. E. cartridge. Listening to the 45s through this player, we found the reproduction clearer and cleaner than from most standard 78s, but this was apparently due to the better reproduction of the highs. The bass end was far less realistic than on the 78s, and we had to resort to use of our bass booster. Playing the 45s through our own extended range system, using a modern pickup open to 12,000 cps. with a 16 inch tone arm, we got a much better idea of the 45s. In all cases, the bass was better balanced with the high end and the overall response was more equitable and hence more realistic. No distortion was apparent. (Paranetically, we might state that two engineers sat in on several of our tests). It is our confirmed opinion that no 45, heard to date, is better in quality or tone than a good shellac pressing. Indeed, two H.M.V. performances recently repressed on 45s by RCA Victor sounded better from the original H.M.V. discs.

We encountered considerable troubles with many 45s. Two out of three discs in all sets heard from the player slipped and refused to play on pitch until the under discs were removed. We placed four single records on the player changer and each in turn slipped. One RCA Victor official informs us that changes are being made to prevent the slipping of these records. However, to date no one has outlined a solution to straightening a warped 45 record. A stack of these we had on a table, removed from direct daylight, had warped badly during the extremely hot days of July. We tried in vain to bend them back in shape. This has not been a personal experience but one shared by many dealers and many music listeners of

our acquaintance. So, in fairness to our readers, we feel justified in publishing our findings to date.

Let it be assumed that we are prejudiced against the 45, let us state that this is not true. In our estimation, considerable engineering work has gone into this record, and it is our belief that RCA Victor has for the first time in the history of the company aimed to produce its "most perfect playing" record. By this, we mean, it has endeavored to make a record which is free from distortion in any area. However, on this score, there is something else to be said.

### Pickup Alignment

In 1937 we published an article on the alignment of the pickup. This is still available to the interested reader in pamphlet form. The price is 25c. It is generally conceded by most engineers of our acquaintance that the record changer mechanism did away with alignment of the tone arm and the pickup head. Because of space limitations, the pickup arm was shortened so that its alignment was badly disturbed in more than two thirds of its area. The professional tone arm is 16 inches in length. (Such a tone arm does not fit into the average record cabinet space). It is possible to align such a tone arm so that inner-groove distortion is not apparent. Some years ago an alignment tractor was made in England and this we have found of great value in mounting all pickups employed. By using the tractor we have found that the mounting must be varied from the manufacturers' directions in order to assure undistorted reproduction in the inner grooves. The use of a 6-inch tone arm, widely employed on l.p. players, is a mistake, because the musical reproduction from the inner grooves is badly served in this way. The difference in the musical sound is marked when a well-aligned tone arm is employed, whether the reproduction is heard from a commercial one-speaker set or a multiple speaker, custom-made outfit. All technicians know this, but in view of the cramped space of the modern record cabinet and the changer operation they no longer speak of it to the customer.

In our next issue, we will discuss some experiences with 78s, 45s and 33s which we had with audiences to whom we have recently lectured.





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## COLLECTORS' RECORDS

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**GIORDANO:** "Fedora—O grandi occhi lucenti di fede!"; **BOITO:** "Mefistofele — L'altra notte in fondo al mare"; **Gemma Bellincioni** (soprano) with **Salvatore Cottone** (piano). IRCC 3056, 10-inch disc, \$1.75.

**PUCCINI:** *Tosca*—"Ah! mostro, lo strazi; Vittoria! Presto, sul Mario!" (fragments; **Emma Eames** (soprano); **Emilio de Marchi** (tenor), **Antonio Scotti** (baritone), **Jacques Bars** (tenor) and **Bernard Bégué** (basso) with **Metropolitan Opera Orchestra** conducted by **Luigi Mancinelli** (recorded by **Lionel Mapleson** during actual performance Jan. 3, 1903). IRCC 3057, 10-inch disc, \$1.75.

**MANCINELLI:** "Ero a Leandro"—Fragment of aria; **Johanna Gadske** (soprano) with **Metropolitan Opera Orchestra** conducted by **Luigi Mancinelli** (March 4, 1903); and **VERDI:** "Aida—Sul del Nilo al sacro lido;" **Johanna Gadske** (soprano), **Louise Homer** (contralto), **Emilio de Marchi** (tenor), **Marcel Journet** (basso), **Adolph Mühlmann** (baritone) and **Roberto Vanni** (tenor) with **Metropolitan Opera Orchestra** and Chorus conducted by **Luigi Mancinelli**, Jan. 31, 1903). IRCC 3058, 10-inch disc, \$1.75.

**BEETHOVEN:** "Fidelio—Abscheulicher! wo eilst du him?"; **Lilli Lehmann** (soprano) with orchestra (1907); and **SCHUBERT:** "Auf dem Wasser zu singen"; **Lilli Lehmann** (soprano) with piano (1906). IRCC 3059-60, two 10-inch discs, \$1.75 each. (Two or more above records at \$1.50 each).

▲ **Bellincioni**, creator not only of "Fedora" but of *Santuzza* in "Cavalleria Rusticana," was considered one of the chief ornaments of the Italian operatic stage around the turn of the century. She and her husband, the tenor **Roberto Stagno**, were a tremendously popular team and often appeared together. Her records, of which there are four as listed in *Bauer*, were

made in 1903-4, and they did not remain long in the catalogs, which accounts for their being much sought after by collectors. The voice, as revealed in this fairly clear specimen, was very intense and Italianate, with a rapid vibrato and heavy chest tones. *Grove's* tells us that despite her exceptional acting she did not have the expected success at *Covent Garden*. It is not so difficult to understand why, for this is strong meat, even for Italian cookery. The historical value of the record is considerable.

The "Tosca" selections replace the earlier dubbing, IRCC 179. The new job is richer and more refined in tone, and the voices stand out exceptionally well for such primitive recordings. All in all this is easily one of the best of the *Mapleson* souvenirs. The *Gadski* solo (from an original in the *New York Public Library*) is also better than average, and the music under the direction of the composer, is an interesting sample of a now forgotten opera. The "Aida" ensemble is even fuller and more impressive, with the voice of *Louise Homer* standing out in bold relief.

Every *Lilli Lehmann* record (even to the least good ones) is worth collecting. The "Fidelio" aria (complete in three parts) is not one of the most spectacular vocally, but it has magnificent style for the contemplation of all aspirants to this role. Her introduction of "appoggiaturas" is of particular interest. The charming *Schubert* song is done very smoothly, and I think more evenly than I have ever heard it from another singer, though others have given it a lift and brightness we do not find here. The dubbings of these discs have been very successfully made.

—P.L.M.

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# RECORD NOTES AND REVIEWS



**BACH, J. C.:** Sinfonie in B flat major; The Berlin State Orchestra, conducted by Walther Gmeindl. Deutsche Grammophon set DGS-7, two discs, price \$6.

**T**HIS graceful and expressive little work was originally the sinfonia to the opera "Lucio Silla." In recent years it has come into the concert hall on its own, and rightfully so, for it stands by itself as one of the most delightful works of its composer. Mengelberg was very fond of this opus and frequently programmed it. He also recorded it (Victor 7483/84, deleted). Those who own the old Mengelberg discs will at long last find just reason for replacement. Prof. Gmeindl plays the music with a free hand, substantiating its melodic gracefulness and stylistic elegance in a most appreciable manner.

Johann Christian Bach, youngest son of Johann Sebastian, was one of the chief exponents of the "galant" style of the 18th century, a style that Mozart brought to the fullest fruition. This "deeply Italianate

German" had a blend of sensibility and dash that endeared him to many in his time. Mozart was delighted by his music and wrote from Paris in 1778: "I love him with all my heart."

The Sinfonia is in three movements, a formality in the opera house which shows Bach's feeling for the importance of his orchestra. Burney praises the richness of his orchestral accompaniments. One would be interested to hear some of J. C.'s vocal operatic excerpts. Listening to this music apart from the opera, either in the concert hall or from records, one places it in the class of an early symphony — and a wholly delightful one too, in my estimation. —P. H. R.

**BEETHOVEN:** Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 67; Paris Conservatory Orchestra conducted by Carl Schuricht. London Long-playing disc No. 7, \$5.95.

**D**URING the last ten years I have heard few conductors play this work for what is it — a classical Viennese symphony. With the advent of the war, it seemed that suddenly everyone (on this side of the Atlantic, at least) began playing the Fifth as if it were about political oratory, and not subjective, formalized music.

However, the public's acceptance for so long a period of that interpretation, even in second-rate performances, made it clear that that particular way of playing the symphony represented this decade's comment on it, whether one liked it or not.

Well, I don't like it, and for that reason I welcome Mr. Schuricht's interpretation.

While I still prefer the Weingartner version on Columbia, my gratitude for Schuricht's way of making music is nonetheless real. He appears to be a sound classical interpreter and an excellent orchestral workman. I shall look forward to hearing more from him.

This is my first encounter with the new London LP record, and what a pleasure it has been. The recording is luminous and clear, the surfaces absolutely noiseless. And for the first time in my experience here is an LP that is recorded at a high enough volume level. My heartiest congratulations to everyone who worked to produce the London LP; on the basis of the sample, it is an authentic jewel. —C.J.L.

**BRAHMS:** Tragic Overture, Op. 81; **Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra** conducted by **Willem Mengelberg**. Capitol-Telefunken set EBL-8014, two discs, price \$3.75.

**H**ERE is a passage from one of Brahms's letters that is typical of many remarks Brahms made throughout his mature years. "That people in general do not understand and do not respect the greatest things, such as Mozart's concertos, helps our kind to live and acquire renown. If they would only know that they are getting from us by drops what they could drink there to their hearts' content!"

Brahms was anything but an ignorant man, and when he made statements like this, he wasn't being "just plain modest, humble, philosophic Brahms." He meant what he was saying.

The "Tragic Overture," in my opinion, illustrates Brahms's observation. The work is a perfect example of the man's attempt to write larger than he could with his available "drops" of musical expressivity. It assumes the pose of majestic, Olympian "grandja" but presents only tunes of small charm dripping either with sugar or pretense, some thick, heavy-sounding sonorities, and interminable "development" passages wherein the strings saw away and saw away saying little and padding much.

In this recording, Mengelberg dramatizes the piece, uses it as a personal vehicle, never lets the listener know what's going to happen next, and pulls out of his men some sensational sonorities. Mengelberg's musical taste in this performance is neither fresh nor particularly sound, and he winds up by not making the work sound like better or worse music. But these records are, all the same, interesting to listen to, are capable of holding one's attention most of the time, and are no end of fun. The good prewar Telefunken recording helps matters along too.

—C. J. L.

**CHABRIER:** Marche Joyeuse; and **MEERBEER:** The Prophet — **Coronation March**; **Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Dimitri Mitropoulos**. Columbia disc 19013-D, price \$.75.

**T**HIS is a curious coupling. I cannot imagine anyone who knows and loves Chabrier's little masterwork wanting the Meyerbeer piece (a thrice-familiar one at that). Mitropoulos's performance of the "Coronation March" again demonstrates his gift for conducting theater music. His performance of "Marche Joyeuse," though a spirited one, lacks the light, luminous, transparent tone needed to convey the work's high wit. The recording is dull and gray in sound — very much like most of the prewar Columbia recordings of this orchestra. —C. J. L.

**CHABRIER:** Suite Pastorale; **The London Philharmonic Orchestra**, conducted by **Jean Martinon**. London FFRR set LA-90, two discs, price \$5.00.

**W**HAT a delectable little work this is — full of carefreeness, exquisitely orchestrated. The four movements — Idyllic, Village Dance, In the Woods, Scherzo-Waltz — are orchestral arrangements from the composer's ten Picturesque Pieces for piano. The country scenes that inspired these selections were surely animated by a many-sided charm. Jean-Aubry, the French writer, must have had this suite in mind when he wrote: "Chabrier's music is redolent of fresh grass and hay, and of the joy of fine fruit that is proud of its golden pulp and its juicy flesh. He embraces it like a healthy girl of buxom figure, and whispers in its ear some amusing phrase that tickles it and imbues it with the freshness of real sensuous laughter."

Those who like realistic instrumental coloring will find this recording a joy to the ear. With the vivid tinkle of the triangle at the opening of the first movement, every instrument stands out in bold relief. The conductor brings life and interest to his treatment of this music. For his is a sensitive temperament that responds to the vivid sensibility of the composer.

—P.H.R.

**BRUCKNER:** Symphony No. 8 in C Minor; **Hamburg Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by **Eugen Jochum**. Deutsche Grammophon set 17, eleven discs (21 sides), price \$28.50.

**ANTON BRUCKNER** was surely one of the most curious creators in musical history. A simple, pious soul, Bruckner was a small-town church organist working in the second half of a century devoted to pragmatism. He adored Wagner's orchestra and musical methods but accepted the tenets of the classical Viennese symphony. Longing to find an artistic relationship "to the good Lord" (to Whom he dedicated a work), he wrote epic-length symphonies.

Bruckner, in spite of his sometimes remarkable creative work, came close to being a failure — so close that even today he is considered a "cause." He said that he was never satisfied with any of his symphonies. Indeed, he continually rewrote parts of all of them throughout his life. And it is true—none of his enormous works ever comes off completely, but there is majestic grandeur and touching beauty in the least of them.

The Eighth Symphony, one of Bruckner's mature masterworks, is, for example, constructed so poorly that it just holds together. Bruckner often begins a striking musical thought and then abandons it before he has developed it successfully. At other times (notably in the angelic third movement) he delivers a sermon in which he says the same noble things over and over. It seems as if he never appears satisfied that he has done enough to honor his God.

Despite this repetition, a device that undoubtedly offends many listeners on grounds of musical taste, it is still possible to experience to the full many intense, deeply-felt moments that may shake one's soul foundations. Such genuine humility, such seriousness of musical thought,

coupled with the wonderful organ-like sounds of Bruckner's orchestra cannot fail to impress acutely the listener who is at once patient, tolerant, and sensitive.

In almost every Bruckner symphony there is a section that is matchless from any point of view. In the Eighth, that section is the second movement Scherzo. It evokes, if I'm not mistaken, the landscape of a heavily-wooded section of Austria. The music is rustic, bold, soaring, and scored in a way that makes the orchestra sound always euphonious and sonorous.

Your reporter is deeply grateful to Eugen Jochum for his uncut performance of this extraordinary work and to London for releasing it here. Though I know but a little of Jochum's work, I feel sure that, whatever he has done in the past, these records must represent one of the pinnacles of his career. His supassing perceptiveness, his poetic imagination, his control over his large and wonderful orchestra, provides an experience that will linger long in the memories of those who take the time to hear this set.

The excellent recording and surfaces do nothing but enhance the beauty of the performance.

—C. J. L.

**CHERUBINI:** Anacreon—Overture. **Berlin Staatskapelle**, conducted by **Herbert von Karajan**. Deutsche Grammophon disc 67514, price \$2.00.

**THE NAME** of the once great Cherubini has been dropped from both the major domestic catalogs in recent years, and this man whom Beethoven rated the greatest of his contemporaries is not given so much as a line of biography in the latest edition of **The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia!** Let us rejoice, therefore, in this splendid and vital performance of one of his finest overtures, formerly familiar to American collectors in a three-sided version by Mengelberg (Columbia 67420D-21D). Though some time has passed since last I heard that classic, I feel sure as I listen to its successor that the admired Dutchman could hardly have surpassed the dramatic impact brought to the music by Karajan, and I have no hesitation in proclaiming this bright and clear-cut recording as definitely superior. There is a fine dynamic range in the German product that makes the most of a magnificent *crescendo*. For a balance of tragic power and artistic restraint the performance is a model.

—P. L. M.

**CHERUBINI:** Symphony in D major; **Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra**, conducted by **Paul Schmitz**. Deutsche Grammophon set DGS-9, four discs, \$11.00.

**I**NVITED in 1815 by the newly formed Philharmonic Society of London to produce and conduct a symphony, an overture and a vocal piece, Cherubini turned up with this symphony. Its dignified nobility decries the appellation of pedant so often hurled at the composer. That it has not attained great popularity in the concert hall is perhaps understandable, for the music tends to a classical austerity. Its purity of style, its dramatic earnestness and its contrapuntal richness are not appreciated by the casual listener. Moreover, the work has an individuality which fails to fit it into any preconceived pigeonhole. One can imagine Gluck writing a symphony in this manner, but no one else. The Germans have always admired Cherubini, but if I am correctly informed, it is only in modern times that his native land, Italy, has shown true interest in his music. To Toscanini, the symphony owes its new impetus in concert halls in Italy and this country.

The first of the four movements begins with a slow section followed by an allegro in which there is both dignity and decorum. It is the longest movement and one in which the dramatic expression is never allowed to get out of bounds. The "Largo cantabile," which follows, remains aloof from sentiment though it is not without poetic expression. The Menuet has boldness and individuality. There is a hint of Weber in the finale though the music has no romantic bloom. To appreciate the qualities of this symphony the listener may require more than one hearing. Its solidarity and fine workmanship are assuredly the attributes of a distinguished artist.

Familiarity with Toscanini's more vital and impulsive performance left me unwilling to accept a recent Italian recording of this work. The present interpretation is typical of the German temperament, more placid, relaxed and far less fervent. Yet one grants this treatment of the score is cogent though it sometimes tends to make the rhythmic patterns rather metronomic. However, Schmitz has a first rate chamber orchestra at his disposal and his performance has been both carefully planned and executed. It is a better recorded performance than the Italian one. The recording, dates from 1941. —P. H. R.

**HAYDN:** Symphony No. 94 in G major (surprise); **Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra**, conducted by **Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt**. Capitol-Telefunken set ECL-8021, three discs, price \$6.00.

**H**AYDN specialists have long regarded this performance as the best on records. There is just reason for this viewpoint. Both the playing and the recording are praiseworthy. Indeed, the quality of the reproduction is quite as impressive as the recent Koussevitzky set, and the efficiency of the Berlin Philharmonic challenges that of the Boston Symphony.

There is not the suffusing vitality in the opening and closing movements that Toscanini brings to this music. The playing here is more relaxed though not lacking in animation. At all times, the conductor brings a fine feeling for adjustment of delicately opposed sonorities and for the expression of the music. This gives the performance more meaning than any extant. I like Schmidt-Isserstedt's broadening of the melodic lines of the introduction to the opening movement. His deliberation of pace in the "Vivace assai" may seem at first lacking in spontaneity, but one soon realizes that this tempo allows for greater definition of line and phrase as well as subtle shaping and pointing up of detail. This movement assuredly means more to Schmidt-Isserstedt than it does to Koussevitzky or Sargent. The careful phrasing in the slow movement permits us to appreciate the fine playing of the Berlin Philharmonic strings. The "surprise" element, the tympani strokes, hardly rears its head in a manner to awaken somnolent lady listeners. It is as it should be, for the tympani remains a less obtrusive feature in Haydn's orchestration than some would have us believe. The second half of the movement is memorably handled. The broadening of the thematic material of the menuet proper is effective, and the delicacy of the Trio makes for deft contrast. The finale is alert but elegant, and the dynamics are closely adhered to. Haydn did not intend this finale to be loudly played. —P.H.R.

**HAYDN:** Symphony No. 90 in C major; **Leipzig Gewandhaus Chamber Orchestra**, conducted by **Paul Schmitz**. Deutsche Grammophon set DGS-11, three discs, price \$8.50.

**A**N unfamiliar Haydn symphony, which I can't remember having heard before, proves a welcome addition to the



composer's work on records. The music, which Geiringer says is worthy of Haydn's maturity, has some of his most affectionate and genial melodies. Listening to this symphony one senses a spirit of optimism, a feeling of elation as though the world was the happiest of places and life, completely comforting. (Mrs. Haydn could hardly have been around.) One can imagine the composer sitting in his outdoor pavillon, enjoying nature on a pleasant day, hardly inattentive to the birds, for some of melodies for the flute are as unfettered as our featured friends. I have never seen a score of this symphony and do not feel able to speak knowingly on its sound construction. But is this essential when the mood captivates one's attentions? Haydn's use of the variation in the second movement shows imagination and resourcefulness. The menuet is a true country dance, despite its form, and the finale has no end of good humour.

The performance is an orderly one, free from tension and on the whole nicely shaped. Yet one senses some of the stolidity of the German temperament in Schmitz's phasing, which would have profited from sharper inflection. The solo flutist deserves mention as he plays with delightful freedom and purity of tone. Very good, clear recording, dating from 1941.

—P. H. R.

**KODALY:** Dances from Galanta; **Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by **Victor de Sabata**. Deutsche Grammophon set 12, two discs, price \$6.00.

**T**HIS is a brilliant work, a gypsy rhapsody that is full of fascinating orchestral devices, great charm, and warm expression. At the moment, I can't think of anyone in our century who has surpassed Kodaly in making a gypsy rhapsody piece sound so fanciful and fresh, so authentic, and at the same time, so original.

Bela Bartok, a fellow countryman of Kodaly, once remarked that because of Liszt, Brahms, and popular gypsy bands (I guess he meant the ones that sounded as if they came from Brooklyn) folks outside of the Slavic countries of central Europe knew next to nothing about real Hungarian gypsy music. I know I'm one of those folks Bartok was talking about, but this work sounds as much like the real McCoy as anything I've ever heard. And I, like many other people, have heard

tons of "phony" gypsy music complete with guys who made that violin cry.

Victor de Sabata's conducting of these dances is superb, and the Berlin Philharmonic's execution is a complete delight. There is a 1939 stamped on these records indicating when they were made. The recording is so fine that if the date had been 1949 I wouldn't have been any the wiser. The surfaces are exemplary.

—C. J. L.

**HINDEMITH:** Nobilissima Visione — Suite from the Ballet "St. Francis" (5 sides); and **HANSON:** Serenade for Flute and Strings (1 side); **The Philadelphia Orchestra**, conducted by **Eugene Ormandy**. Columbia set MM-841, \$4.00, or Microgroove disc ML-4177, coupled with **Hindemith:** Symphonic Metamorphosis on Themes of Weber; played by **The Cleveland Orchestra**, conducted by **George Szell**, price \$4.85.

**T**HE HINDEMITH is in three movements: Introduction and Rondo; March and Pastorale; and Passacaglia. In this suite, as in the "Mathis der Maler," Hindemith has chosen sections of the original score "which are self-sufficient and comprehensible as concert music and do not depend, therefore, on supplementary stage action." This is music in which the gentler, poetic side of the composer is pleasingly evidenced, notably in the mystic beauty of the Pastorale section of the second movement, where he conjures pictures of the medieval cloisters of the Saint. Harsh and dissonant is the March, conveying the brutality of soldiers of the time. The fascinating and intricate finale, Passacaglia, corresponds to the "Hymn to the Sun" in the ballet score. I have never seen the ballet, but this suite appeals strongly. It shows the amazing fertility of Hindemith's contrapuntal gifts, his keen insight in approaching a given subject. In its intermingling of old and new moods, it might have been inspired by the Italian, Malipiero.

Hanson's Serenade is a quiet work, beautifully performed by William Kincaid. The spirits of Debussy and Delius hover over the music. This tender, little poetic piece should be issued on an independent disc, for it is overshadowed by the strength of the Hindemith score.

The performance of the Hindemith suite is properly animated and tenderly manly where required. If in the dominating technical aspects of the score Ormandy tends to place the focus on perfection, this course



of action gives requisite objectivity. One feels however, that the conductor has true admiration for this music and has shaped his interpretation with care and forethought. In the Hanson piece, Ormandy's discretion allows the soloist his just due. The recording is excellent with a wide range of dynamics from a true pianissimo to a realistic forte. I have not heard the L.P. version of the suite, but its inclusion of another Hindemith work promises double interest.

—P. H. R.

**LISZT:** Tasso — Lament and Triumph (Symphonic Poem No. 2). Deutsche Grammophon set DGS-13, three discs, price \$8.50. **LISZT:** Mazeppa (Symphonic Poem No. 6). Deutsche Grammophon set 14, two discs, \$6.00. Both played by **Berlin State Opera Orchestra**, conducted by **Paul Van Kempen**.

**T**HE first of these tone poems was conceived as a "symphonic prelude" to Goethe's drama, "Tasso," and performed during the 100th anniversary of the poet's birth in 1849 at Weimar. The subject of this music is Torquato Tasso, famous 16th century Italian poet, whose soul-tormentings were largely self-inflicted. Liszt tells us he aims to portray in the first part of his tone poem Tasso's soul in its suffering and conflict against the intrigues of his time. The second part is the triumph of the poet's spirit. "Lament and Triumph," says Liszt, "these are the two great contrasts in the fate of poets, of whom it has been justly said that, while curses may weigh heavily on their lives, blessings are always on their tomb."

"Mazeppa" owes its origin to some verses in Victor Hugo's "Les Orientales." Liszt conceived it first as a piano piece — No. 4 of his "Transcendental Etudes." The program is too long to outline. Suffice to say, Mazeppa, the convict, has been bound hand and foot to a fiery horse and his sides punctured with sabres. His futile rage gladdens his executioners but before they can finish their job "a cry goes up, and suddenly horse and man fly with the wind over the plains." Later, the poet tells us, Mazeppa is made a prince by the tribes of the Ukraine.

The horrors of the ride alone concern Liszt. This vividly picturesque music is hardly dull, but it is dated today. Bernard Shaw said of this work in 1889: "When I first heard it at the Crystal Palace I tried vainly to recollect what the rushing, swishing triplets which represent the galloping horse were like. At last a rustic-

looking young lady behind me said very audibly, 'Oh, isn't it like frying rashers?' And so it was exactly." Having discovered the remark of Shaw's I am unable to forget its connotations whenever I hear this work. Such are the effects of some remarks.

As for "Tasso," its romantic drama meanderings seem over long and somewhat pretentious—the product of plush curtained and gold-encrusted, 19th-century concert halls.

Those who admire these works will find Van Kempen's performances effectively contrived and the clearcut recording a great advance over old sets.

—P.H.R.

**LOTHAR:** Overture to "Schneider Wibbel;" **Berlin State Orchestra** conducted by **Carl Schuricht**. Deutsche Grammophon disc 68269, price \$2.50.

**M**ARK LOTHAR, a contemporary German composer, is, on the basis of this work, a romantic conservative. His overture contains little that would indicate an extraordinary musical personality or a capacity for striking innovation.

The piece is all too typical of many we hear today. It opens with a fast, rhythmic section in which the composer, acknowledging that he lives in the twentieth century, plays "footie" with a little harmonic dissonance. There follows, without adequate preparation (just what you'd expect), a sweet melodic theme voiced by the strings. The rest of the work is more of the same.

The conducting and playing seem to be completely satisfactory. The recording and surfaces are excellent.

—C.J.L.

**MARSCHNER:** Overture to "Hans Heiling;" **Berlin State Orchestra** conducted by **Leopold Ludwig**. Deutsche Grammophon disc 57313, price \$2.50.

**T**HIS selection is a good example of why we don't hear works by secondary German romantic composers of the early 19th. century. There is little reason to hear these works often, it seems to me. This piece is, like so many of its kind, soundly constructed but musically uninteresting. It is completely overshadowed by the work of the romantic giants of that period. Since the purpose of records is to make possible repeated hearings of anything and since there is no reason save historical interest for owning the disc, I

can't understand why it was selected to be released in this country. For those who are curious, I can report that Ludwig's conducting is good and that his orchestra plays well. There is a swishing sound on the last inch or so of the surface on the second side of this disc. —C. J. L.

**PUCCHINI:** Manon Lescaut—Intermezzo; **MASCAGNI:** Cavalleria Rusticana — Intermezzo; **WOLF-FERRARI:** The Jewels of the Madonna — Intermezzi Nos. 1 and 2; **Robin Hood Dell Orchestra of Philadelphia** conducted by **Dimitri Mitropoulos**. Columbia set MX-317, two discs, price \$3.00.

**DIMITRI MITROPOULOS** takes four innocuous intermezzi from three more or less inferior operas and makes them sound as if they had more life in them than one usually hears. The recording, a splendid one, and the surfaces, wonderfully quiet, give him every assistance.

The more I hear Mitropoulos conduct theatre music, the more I think that the pit is his real home. I have seldom enjoyed his work in the concert hall because of his lack of personal poetry, his inability to make an orchestra sound anyway but powerful and husky, his delight in exaggerating dynamics and whipping up tempi. That Mitropoulos has a fine command over an orchestra, there is no question. That he can animate almost any piece (whether or not one thinks he has missed the point of a particular work in so doing), there is no question in my mind.

With so much skill and a real virtuoso temperament, Mitropoulos seems to have been born to the theater. I am sorry to see those splendid attributes channeled so often in what seems to me the wrong direction. Please, let's have more theatre music recorded by Mitropoulos. —C. J. L.

**MOZART, LEOPOLD:** Divertimento Militaire sine Sinfonia; **The Orchestra of the State, Berlin**, conducted by **Prof. Walther Gmeindl**. Deutsche Grammophon set DGS-15, 5 sides, price \$8.50.

**THE** father of Mozart was regarded as a composer of merit in his day, but little of his music is remembered or performed in our time. The present work, the title of which informs us is without sinfonia or overture, suggests music written for entertainment. Just what occasioned its composition we are not told, for the sponsors of the records omit notes from the set.

One imagines the work was written when Mozart, the son, was in his infancy, for most of Leopold's existing scores are said to date from around this time. It is typical mid-18th-century music of diversion, smoothly and neatly contrived, suggesting no great motivating urge other than entertainment. One senses the younger Mozart acquired his melodic grace from his father, for it is much in evidence in this score. The military characteristics of the music are immediately set forth in the opening March and in the succeeding Presto. There is a saucy, jaunty feeling to the military themes but before they depart, one begins to feel they might—if pursued much farther — pall. In the Andante we encounter the gentler side of Leopold, his feeling for poetic expression. Though of no depth, this movement has charm. So too has the Menuet, and its Trio played by woodwinds and snare drums affirms the military character of the work in a pert and effective manner. The final Presto sails along smoothly.

Prof. Gmeindl give a straightforward performance. One has the feeling that the monotonous rhythmic layout of the work would not permit a more personalized reading. —P.H.R.

**RESPIGHI:** Pines of Rome; **Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Eugene Goossens**. RCA Victor set WDM-1309, two 45 rpm. discs, \$2.25.

**THIS** is a good performance of Respighi's popular landscape piece in a recording that has probably been in RCA Victor's "ice box" for a couple of years (Thor Johnson served last season as musical director of the Cincinnati Orchestra). The orchestra under Goossens does here quite the best playing that I have heard from it on records. If that playing is without the sumptuous tonal beauty of the Philadelphia Orchestra in its performance under Ormandy (Columbia set MM-616 or ML-4020), it will nevertheless be welcomed by those who enjoy this piece and who own a 45rpm. player.

Aside from some distortion in the sound of the woodwind instruments on sides 2 and 3 (notable in the long clarinet solo) and a disagreeable surface on side 4, the recording is satisfactory. It wouldn't hurt my feelings if this and other sets of "doily discs" were recorded at a higher volume level. —C. J. L.

**SCARLATTI, A.:** Concerto Grosso in F minor; Wiesbaden Collegium Musicum, conducted by **Edmund Weyns**. Capitol-Telefunken disc 89-800059, price \$1.50.

**T**HERE is little of the instrumental music of Alessandro Scarlatti on records. The attractive "Sonata," for flute, strings and harp (on Victor discs 4250/51), played by the Paris Quintet, has long been withdrawn. Through the years, this work has proved most appealing for its melodic elegance and harmonic expressivity. The present concerto possesses the same ingratiating qualities. In the slow section of the opening movement and in the Largo that follows, we encounter music that may well have inspired Bach and Handel. There is that poised dignity in the Largo, a sweet sadness that is characteristic of much music of the early 18th century. The reiterated thematic material of the fast section of the opening movement catches the listener's fancy with its deft polyphonic treatment. The final Allemande adds a dance pattern that has grace and beauty.

The performing chamber orchestra, perhaps composed of students, is a capable and well rehearsed ensemble. The conductor suggests a true sympathy with the music and his clean phrasing and gentle emphasis of the rhythmic patterns is praiseworthy. His broad retard at the end of the first movement is the only point on which I would question his authority. The recording is good, most acceptable for this music.

There is another Concerto Grosso (in F major) on records worth looking up, played by the Chamber Orchestra of the Conservatory of San Pietro a Majella, Naples (HMV DB-05352). —P.H.R.

**SCHUBERT:** Symphony No. 6 in C major; London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by **Josef Krips**. London FFRR set 88, four discs, price \$9.00, or Long-Playing disc 21, price \$5.95.

**"K RIPS,"** wrote a friend of ours from Vienna last year, "has plenty of vitality but little subtlety. He gets a lively tone behind the singers in opera and never lets your interest lag when he conducts Schubert and Johann Strauss." London Gramophone has already given us several Strauss waltzes by this conductor, which for sheer exuberance cannot be matched. Many of us already have Beecham's performance of this work, but Krips — espe-

cially in the 1.p. version — may take precedence. The reading is not as polished or sensitively phrased as Beecham's, but it has a healthy, forth-right character which seems to me in keeping with Schubert's music. It provides an animation to a work that has less to say of importance than that "pearl of great price," the "Fifth Symphony." Its cheerfulness and gaiety are its only redeeming features. The wise listener would never think of programming the "Fifth" and "Sixth" together.

As a recording, this is more realistic with its concert hall resonance than the Beecham, but here again one feels that its excessive reverberation tends to bloat the music on occasion and coarsen the tone in louder passages. I have not heard the 1.p. version as yet, but I am looking forward to it with interest. —P.H.R.

**SIBELIUS:** Symphony No. 1 in E Minor; Stockholm Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by **Tor Mann**. Capitol-Telefunken set EEL-8020, five discs, \$7.50.

**F**OR some people the Sibelius "First Symphony" is a beloved work, for others it is a third-rate piece. Myself, I find its formal structure, its melodic material and its instrumentation to be of the poorest quality.

To make this work (in a recorded version) absorbing even in spots requires a conductor of the highest skill who will play down the pretensions of the piece. It also requires a superior high-fidelity recording that will relieve to some extent Sibelius's "dirty-brown orchestral coloring," for the sound of this music in a limited range recording (which this set is) is a formidable barrier for any music lover to surmount.

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Tor Mann's conducting is completely adequate and his reading an honest one. However, I do not believe for a minute that because of Mr. Mann's Scandinavian background and his deep feeling for the work (as the author of the album notes says) that this is the last word in recorded versions of the Sibelius First Symphony. It seems to me no better than the old Kajanus set or the newest Ormandy version. The Stockholm Radio Symphony Orchestra is a second-rate orchestra scarcely better than Kajanus's unnamed group and yards away from being in the Philadelphia Orchestra's league. —C.J.L.

**STRAUSS, JOHANN, JR.:** Die Fledermaus — Overture; **Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra**, conducted by **Herbert von Karajan**. Deutsche Grammophon disc 68043, price \$2.50.

▲ If this 1942 recording does not measure up to London's FFRR technique, it is still a handsome piece of work from knowing engineers. Though perhaps falling short in frequency range of the recent Philadelphia recording, what we hear suffices. The Berlin Philharmonic is a great orchestra and von Karajan handles it with gratifying results. There is dignity and sentient warmth in his performance of this familiar music. Not since Walter's version of the work have we had a more persuasive reading. —P. H. R.

**TCHAIKOVSKY:** Symphony No. 4 in F minor, Op. 36; **The Paris Conservatory Orchestra**, conducted by **Erich Kleiber**. London Long-Playing disc No. 2, price \$5.95.

**W**E throw in an extra dollar or even more these days for much that comes from Europe. Maybe it helps a good cause. Certainly it brings us an absolutely quiet surface in this English-made, unbreakable record — no tickings, no swishes, no reminder of the needle on the disc. Such LPs will surely offer the keenest competition to pre-recorded tape.

London Gramophone Corporation, which recently took over the distribution of English Decca FFRR recordings, can be justly proud of its first 33s. The clarity of this recording, its realistic instrumental timbre, its freedom from shrill upper strings and distorted highs is a pleasure to listen to. These new long-playing products are as much "full frequency range recording" as the more recent 78s which domestic Decca formerly sponsored.

It was not long back that I was reviewing the Ormandy performance of this work, which I liked because it was manly, uninflated and meticulously fashioned. Since then, returning to the old Boston Symphony version, I realized how more vivid Koussevitzky's treatment of the symphony was. I speak in the past advisedly, for Koussevitzky's more recent interpretations of Tchaikovsky have disappointed. They have been too polished, revealing an amazing amount of material perfection, but less interpretative urge.

Kleiber's reading of the "Fourth" may be more conventional than the Koussevitzky, but his musical honesty recommends it. He does not go in for tremendous brass tone in the opening and closing movements, but by conscientious shaping of the material makes true music. In the turbulent finale every note is heard. Only in the second movement does he seem to falter on occasion, as though insufficient rehearsal made him a bit nervous or uncertain. One would be less aware of such minor details were it not for the memory of Koussevitzky's unexcelled feeling for this movement. The scherzo is delightfully performed, and those French string players are experts in light, pizzicato work. In Ormandy's reading we realize the technical excellence of a great orchestra. Here, we are aware of an honest evaluation of the music, without bombast or stress of the composer's self-pity, played by a competent but less imposing orchestra. —P. H. R.

**Von SUPPE:** Light Cavalry Overture; **Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra**, conducted by **Erich Kleiber**. Capitol-Telefunken disc 89-8088, price \$1.50.

▲ Though Kleiber is always a reliable musician, this orderly performance of an old favorite fails to intrigue this listener. The recording, dating back at least to 1935, no longer yields the right instrumental prospectus on the music. Fiedler's more recent disc remains unchallenged. —P. G.

**TCHAIKOVSKY:** 1812 Overture, Op. 49; **Concertgebouw Orchestra**, conducted by **Willem Mengelberg**. Capitol-Telefunken set EBL-8022, price \$4.50.

**E**UROPEAN relations being what they are these days, one is not surprised to find that both Mercury and Capitol are releasing Mengelberg's performance of this familiar work. Though Mercury had



the first opportunity at the recording, it did not decide on a conventional 78 release but brought out an L.P. version (MG 15000). A first pressing of the L.P. disc proved a bit disconcerting as it failed to track with some pickups, but Mercury has rectified this and the latest issue is all right. Coupled with Mercury's L.P. version of the "1812" is Mengelberg's last performance of the Strauss tone poem "Don Juan."

As Capitol announces long playing records in September, we may eventually have another L.P. version of this overture. Mengelberg's performance of this music is lusty and melodramatic. If the reproduction were more realistic the performance would take precedence. However, there is a Decca FFRR version which for sheer sound tops this one. —P.H.R.

**VAUGHAN WILLIAMS:** Symphony No. 6 in E minor (7 sides), and Fantasia on "Greensleeves" (1 side); **Philharmonic Orchestra of New York**, conducted by **Leopold Stokowski**. Columbia set MM-838, price \$5.00.

**E**LSEWHERE in this issue, the ever thoughtful English critic, Edward Sackville West, discusses this symphony at some length. He believes the work to be a symphonic poem rather than a symphony proper, inasmuch as its four movements, "although clearly divided, are played without a break." Yet, after hearing the composition several times, one feels the dignity and nobility of the symphony is upheld. It is the intensely personal character of the nebulous finale, which the composer calls an Epilogue, that deviates from the symphonic pattern. Here Vaughan Williams quietly meditates in a philosophical manner. It has been suggested by one writer that the tragedy of the Second World War, during which the symphony was written, inspired the opening three movements; and that the finale is the contemplation by the composer of some Utopia. Sackville West likens it to the "final echo of a vanishing world." Stokowski, who rates this symphony among the "greatest creations of the masters," rightfully says "every listener will find his own meaning in the unique finale — one of the most profound expressions in all music." If the composer dreamed of a Utopia, its potentiality fades out in the music as though its existence lay too far beyond the reach of man to

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affirm in musical expression. To me, this coda to a disturbing work that harbors dark thoughts and turbulent drama, seems more the expression of resignation. It is an achievement that is rare and unique in a world that refuses to find contemplation a motivating impulse in life.

Stokowski's performance of this music is thoughtful and penetrating. Only at one point does he deviate from the composer's directions and that is in the second movement when he accelerates the tempo at a climatic point. Though it makes the dramatic impact more obvious, one can hardly say it is remiss. Stokowski's performance of this work in the concert hall was somewhat faster than in his recorded version. I find the present reading more searching and expressive. Indeed, I can hardly think of a more persuasive performance. The spacing of the symphony has been arranged to have the separation of the movements occur within the record faces, so that the composer's wish for no breaks be served.

The recording, though at a somewhat lower level than some others from its source, can be rated as a fine reproduction of the Philharmonic Symphony. It is necessary, however, to turn up the volume control to obtain the essential realism in the reproduction. An English recording, made by Sir Adrian Boult and the London Symphony Orchestra (H.M.V. C7755-58), is due shortly in this country. Boult first performed the work upon its completion in 1947.

I should plump for a long-playing version of this work for one reason, because I feel the "Fantasia" on the last face will not be included. It is announced for issue in September. Though a wholly charming opus, the "Fantasia" does not fit with the symphony and to me proves disturbing after the mood of the deeply moving finale. While Stokowski plays it expressively, my own preference lies with the Boyd Neel version on English Decca disc K-1216.

—P.H.R.

**VERDI:** *La Traviata* — Preludes to Acts 1 and 3; **Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by **Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt**. Capitol-Telefunken disc 89-80086, price \$1.25.

▲ An excellent record that features some wonderful playing by the string section of the Berlin Philharmonic and a knowing reading by Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt. Though there are a dozen performances

of this lovely music on records already, none of the ones I know outclasses this one for beauty of tone, precision of execution, and clarity of expression. The recording and surfaces are satisfactory.

—C. J. L.

**WAGNER:** *Die Meistersinger* — Overture; **L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande**, conducted by **Hans Knappertsbusch**. London FFRR, disc K-1905, price \$2.00.

**T**HIS is the most lethargic performance of this overture I have ever heard. Vagaries of tempo and indecisive phrasing often give the impression of a person slurring his words. Knappertsbusch, never my idea of a first-rate conductor from past experiences, lets the orchestral playing slide along with insufficient outlining of the thematic material. The motive in the brasses lacks essential bounce. The orchestra is hardly a front ranking one, but its regular conductor, Ansermet, achieves better results with it. This is not one of the best Decca FFRR recordings. The woodwinds are faint in tone and the whole thing lacks the brilliance attained in other FFRR releases. They do better in dear old England.

—P.H.R.



**BEETHOVEN:** *Concerto in C major for Violin, Cello, Piano, and Orchestra*, Op. 56; **John Corigliano, Leonard Rose, Walter Hendl**, with **Philharmonic Orchestra of New York**, conducted by **Bruno Walter**. Columbia Microgroove disc ML-2059 (10-inch), price \$3.85.

**T**HE so-called "Triple" concerto, for all its three faces, does not rear its head above Beethoven's other works in the concerto form. By and large, it can be called *Gebrauchsmusik*, as it was written for the Archduke Rudolf of Austria, shortly after the latter became Beethoven's pupil. The piano part was undoubtedly kept comparatively easy for the Archduke's performance. "The violin and cello parts, however, are far more intricate," Wilhelm Altmann point out, "the latter particularly often lies awkwardly for the fingers — a proof that Beethoven could exact a good deal from the artists in the service of the Archduke." The concerto is in the nature of a concertante (Beethoven originally intended it to be called "Grand Concerto

concertant"), and is in the style of similar works in vogue at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century. Speaking of its neglect, Altmann says: "It deserves performance if only for the wonderful and all too short Largo in A flat major; also on account of the graceful-melodious and brilliant final Polonaise, with its many touches of modulation." While one concurs with Altmann's evaluation of the beautiful Largo, the finale one rightfully feels is unnecessarily protracted. The long first movement belongs essentially to the soloists and gives the orchestra little of consequence to do.

The performance of this work is an unusually felicitous one. Mr. Walter has chosen three musicians from the Philharmonic Orchestra whose temperamental capabilities match his own. Unquestionably, the conductor has an affection for the music and it is noted in his warm feeling and gracious phrasing. Mr. Hendl plays the lyrical piano part in like manner and Mr. Rose matches the conductor's feelings with expressive fervor, emerging as the star performer. Mr. Corigliano handles his elaborate part competently. Such a performance will assuredly have wide appeal, though the work may prove to be more happily cast as a *pièce d'occasion*.

The recording, which may well have been, especially devised for Microgroove reproduction (a 78 version has not been released as yet), is exceptional well balanced, clear in detail, and realistic in dynamics. —P.H.R.

**BRAHMS:** Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 77; **Ossy Renaudy** with the **Concertgebouw Orchestra**, conducted by **Charles Muench**. London FFRR set 87, five discs, price \$11.00, or Long-Playing disc No. 1, price \$5.95.

**W**HEN our friend, W. R. Anderson, visited our home recently, we discussed the present recording. Agreement that admiration of a single performance of a famous composition tends, in the case of the record listener, to circumvent appreciation of another's work was shared. There is much to be said in favor of duplication. "One may not be minded to recall another performance when listening to a new one," W.R.A. said. "Few listeners remember last week's rendition of a score when another artist is heard in the concert hall. More often than not, they are disposed to be friendly toward the

latest soloist, especially if the interpretation has particular merits of its own. Take the Renardy-Muench version of the Brahms Violin Concerto. I doubt that many in the concert hall would recall another's performance in its entirety while listening to this gentle artistic reading of the score."

The point is well taken, and one may observe in W.R.A.'s review in "The Gramophone" (February 1949) that no comparisons were made. Though many may agree with the present reviewer that the Szigeti-Ormandy rendition of this score is the most artistically compelling on records, the qualities of other interpreters prove more appealing to listeners of different temperaments. The febrile intensity of Szigeti's playing asks for undeviated attention and seldom permits true relaxation. Both Renaudy and Muench preserve "the intimate, affectionate qualities of Brahms." The violinist's tone is sweet, sometimes dangerously near to sentimentality. His artistry is, however, admirable for its rhythmic buoyancy, its tonal smoothness and sensitivity. Neither he nor Muench dig into the music line as do Szigeti and Ormandy. Muench, on the other hand, brings a gentle elasticity to the rhythms which ideally fits the Renardy interpretation, though his accompaniment throughout is less assertive than most. "I have rarely heard so soft a recorded accompaniment," says W.R.A. "I am inclined to be pleased with one [recording] — especially of a loved work — in which I can make my own mental-spiritual adjustments if I want to, without being bludgeoned by excessive volume. I find the colors more stimulating and convincing when not daubed on cinematically . . . If this recording seems on a small scale, there are plenty of big ones. Its purity and water-color gentleness commend it."

To me, this is a rightfully friendly approach to a friendly performance. I can accept Renardy and Muench on their own terms in the first two movements without conjuring memories of others, but in the

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spirited and humorous finale I miss the fire and bite of Szigeti's violin. It is inevitable at some point that the favorite would intrude his presence. I suspect this L.P. disc will prove a competitor to the Szigeti-Ormandy.

—P.H.R.

**RAVEL:** Piano Concerto; **Monique Haas**, pianist; **NWDR, Hamburg Orchestra**, conducted by **Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt**. Deutsche Grammophon set 16, three discs, \$8.50.

**EVERYONE** involved in this recording seems to have a wonderful time with Ravel's seldom played Piano Concerto. Miss Haas, Mr. Schmidt-Isserstedt, and his men seem to love and understand this cleverly-made work. They show us clearly the blues tunes, the jazz rhythms of the first movement, render touchingly the sweet ironic melodies of the second movement, and make the final portion of the work as brilliant as you have probably ever heard it.

All of this enchantment, charm, color, and expression is faithfully mirrored by a magnificent recording. The London Gramophone Corp. will make a lot of people happier with this set.

—C. J. L.



**BEETHOVEN:** Serenade in D major for Flute, Violin and Viola, Op. 25; **John Wummer** (flute), **Alexander Schneider** (violin), and **Milton Katims** (viola). Columbia set MM-839, three discs, \$4.00.

▲ There are those that flute and strings are the chamber combination. They point out that the flute provides contrast to the monotonies of sustained and unrelieved string tone, that its timbre has about the same penetrating quality as a violin so that reasonable balance is maintained without artificial compensation. Of course, most of the people that feel this way are flute players, but I will be among the first to agree that the flute is a handsome addition to any small instrumental combination. The flute quartets of Mozart are a case in point.

This is early Beethoven, frothy stuff that can not but delight the most determined chamber music hater. The six movements of the "Serenade," in the style of the Haydn and Mozart "Divertimenti," eschew the cerebral exercises of the later, more

highly touted, chamber music.

John Wummer, formerly with the Detroit and NBC orchestras, is now first flute of the N. Y. Philharmonic. Alexander Schneider needs little introduction to record collectors; suffice it to say he laid the foundation of his reputation as a member of the Budapest Quartet. Milton Katims is leader of the NBC Symphony viola section and an accomplished chamber music performer. One can find no fault with the ensemble of these three redoubtable instrumentalists. In matters of tempo, phrasing, balance, etc., they are unimpeachable. The recording is clear and realistic, the surfaces quiet. All in all a set that can be recommended without any reservations.

—A. W. P.

**COUPERIN:** Le rossignol en amour; **Three Bird Pieces:** The Goldfinch (Ben Cosyns); **Woody Cock** (Giles Farnaby); **Robin** (John Mundy); **Three Elizabethan Pieces:** Tower Hill (Giles Farnaby); **Heartease** (Anonymous); **The King's Morisco** (Anonymous).

**Daniel Purcell:** Divisions on a Ground Bass. **Carl Dolmetsch** (recorder) and **Joseph Saxby** (harpsichord). Two 10-inch London discs. R 10105-6. \$1.00 each.

▲ It seems almost an impertinence to write of these fresh and charming performances, so eloquently do they speak for themselves. The music covers several types of recorder to fine advantage. Mr. Dolmetsch has mastered the instrument, so often thought of simply as a toy, and he plays the music with a really sustained and musical line. The thin little tone of the "sopranino" recorder is particularly delightful, while the contrasting richness of the tenor "lends" variety.

The "Divisions on a Ground Bass" have a special interest as a rare example of the music of Daniel, brother of the great Henry Purcell. The recording is very true and lifelike, and the balance of the instruments very good.

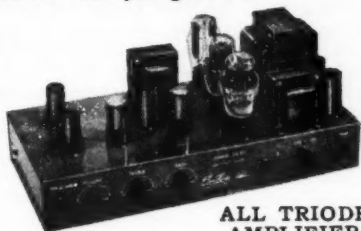
—P. L. M.

**SCHUBERT:** Quintet in A major, Op. 114 (The Trout); **Franz Rupp** (piano), **W. Stross** (violin), **V. Hartl** (viola), **A. Walter** (cello), **L. Jaeger** (bass). Capitol-Telefunken set EDL-8019, four discs, price \$7.50.

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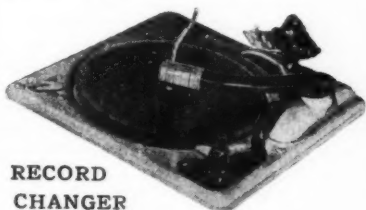
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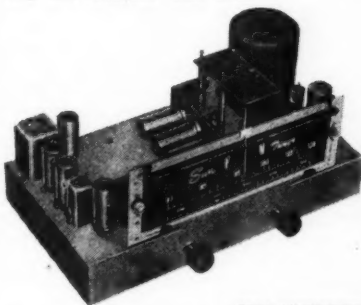
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poser's music in a more assertive manner than the role of the accompanist permits. Artistic compatibility, seldom considered when a noted solo player joins a chamber outfit, is however most evident in the present ensemble where Rupp and Stross happily shape their phrases in a consanguinous manner. In the Pro Arte ensemble, where Schnabel plays the piano Victor set 312), the pianist asserts his individuality more patently. His seems a more centralized role. Rupp often stays in the background, evidencing his right to the spotlight only when the music permits. The Stross ensemble, an unfamiliar one to me, is evidently a well-rehearsed and competent group. Jaeger, playing the double bass (an instrument often characterized as an unhappy member of an intimate group), handles his part with a smoothness and efficiency which might well lead the uniformed to believe he were playing the cello.

As a recording, this set offers no advance over the 1936 Victor issue. Yet, the unmistakable sociability of the performance, recommends the release. There is a mellowness of tone and an intimacy in the recording which belongs to music of this kind. It was made in late 1936 or 1937.

This work, as most of us know, gains its nickname from the use of the composer's song "The Trout" in its fourth movement. It is not one of Schubert's greatest chamber works but rightfully remains one of his most popular. For this is music that consistently sings; and even though it can be said he rather nonchalantly handles the variations on one of his most delightful songs, this movement has an appeal which few would deny. Arthur Hutching, in his book on Schubert, says: "Schoolboys love the variations in which the tune can always be heard with such slight but delicious alteration, and old boys who do not love them are advancing in sin as well as years." I have always found them irresistible. Immediately, I anticipate that jaunty, bucolic finale which suggests an amiable walk in the country. It is in the variations and the finale where Franz Rupp shines most auspiciously for me with his rippling lyrical phrases, so smoothly and adroitly handled. I recommend this set to all true lovers of chamber music and those unadventurous souls who have never bought a chamber music performance. As an introduction to the intimate ensemble art, Schubert's "Die Forellen" quintet is a sure bet. —P.H.R.

**SHOSTAKOVICH:** Trio in E minor, Op. 67; **Dmitri Shostakovich** (piano), **David Oistrakh** (violin), **Milos Sadlo** (cello). Mercury set DM-21, three discs, \$5.00.

**I**N MARCH 1947, we wrote on another version of this work played by the composer and two other musicians (Compass Set C-102, now withdrawn). Let it be said at the outset that this is a finer performance and recording. Shostakovich is a first rate pianist and apparently an efficient spokesman for his own music. Oistrakh, the Soviet Union's most gifted violinist and an artist of keen perceptions, reveals himself a splendid ensemble performer and a musician of particular worth. The competence of the cellist makes for a well rounded group that is happily balanced in a fine recording.

This is one of Shostakovich's most thoughtful and probing scores, revealing a depth of feeling indicative of the fullest maturity of expression. Its dedication to the memory of the musicologist, Ivan Sollertinsky, a close friend of the composer, offers a keynote to the sombre aspects of the music. The characteristic brooding melancholy of the opening, with its highly effective scoring where cello harmonics are pitted against the lower sonorities of the violin, immediately impresses the listener. Here and in the slow movement the composer has written as convincingly and as absorbingly, as anywhere. To hear the playing of Oistrakh in both these movements is a rare experience. The scherzo, owns a mocking gaiety with its harsh dissonances and its rhythmic alterations. Its change of mood is justified in making dramatically effective the first and third movements. The latter, in passacaglia form, is a moving piece in which the piano furnishes an ostinato. Shostakovich's biographer, Ivan Martynov, contends the finale is the most important part of the entire work. Two themes of Hebraic origin are introduced which give rise to new and effective rhythmic effects. The emotion is turbulent at first but with the return of the opening theme of the first movement, scored in a Debussy manner, the passionate intensity terminates, and the work ends in a sombre manner.

One suspects Mercury will issue a long-playing disc of this work in the near future. It will be welcome for such closely-knit music as this should be uninterrupted in its performance for greater appreciation. —P.H.R.





**BEETHOVEN:** Sonata No. 6 in F major, Op. 10, No. 2; and **BACH** (trans. Busoni): Chaconne; **Egon Petri** (piano). Columbia 10-inch Microgroove disc ML 2049, price \$3.85.

▲ I have not seen a 78 listing of the Beethoven sonata, but it proves a welcome companion to his performance of the Bach work on which I have previously written. I am glad to have both these compositions in unbroken performances. It preserves the mood and makes one realize how adroit the pianist's planning and realization of a performance is.

The sonata was much favored by Beethoven, who, undoubtedly at 27, was consciously displaying his sense of humor more than his predecessors. The work suggests the influence of Haydn but the latter was never such a bold jester. The casual listener will hardly appreciate the composer's interplay of keys, but the knowing pianist cannot fail to delight at some of his audacity. The inner movement (Allegretto) includes a scherzo and an intermezzo. In the minor mood, it is darkly passionate and full of thought. The finale is full of humor and gaiety.

Petri plays this work with knowing artistry, observing all repeats in the music. These, one suspects, Beethoven might have said give audiences a second change to grasp fully his musical intentions. How wisely Petri is not to hurry the tempi of the finale, for its gaiety is dependent on mood, not on pace.

The recording is quite good, but the piano tone in some of the loud passages seems a little more metallic than from standard shellac records. —P.H.R.

**HANDEL:** Passacaglia in G minor; and **ROSSI:** Andantino in C major; played by **Maryla Jonas** (piano). Columbia 10-inch disc 17562-D, price 85c.

▲ The Handel piece is the last movement of the harpsichord suite No. 7, and is also known in the Halvorsen arrangement for violin and cello. Rossi's andantino is a rarity and, it must be admitted, not an especially interesting one. Essentially a pianist of the romantic school, Miss Jonas does not achieve entirely satisfactory results here. Her playing is a little fussy; and while it has some charming effects,

it's not what is needed in the sturdy Passacaglia, which emerges prettified instead of noble. The recording, technically, is excellent. —H. C. S.

**HAYDN:** The Musical Clocks; **E. Power Biggs** (organ). Victor 10-inch disc 10-1471, price \$1.00, or 7-inch disc 49-0419, price 95c.

**H**AYDN'S eight little pieces, written for musical clocks, are only mildly diverting. One suspects that they might prove more interesting heard from the clocks, which had, of course, a music-box apparatus in them. The organ does not quite convey the tinkling charm of the music box and Biggs' registrations lack sufficient variety of tone. The organist plays in a delicate and conservative manner. Surely, Haydn intended more sparkle and humor than Biggs conveys here. I find the reproduction as good on the 78 as the 45. —J. N.

**HINDEMITH:** Ludus Tonalis; played by **Bruce Simonds** (piano). Concert Hall Society long-playing disc CHC-14, \$4.85.

**T**HIS is a first recording, and an important one. Hindemith finished the music in October, 1942; the title page of the published edition has the following subtitle: "Studies in Counterpoint, Tonal Organization and Piano Playing." To continue with the publisher's statement, "Ludus Tonalis consists of twelve piano Fugues in as many keys, connected by Interludes in free lyric and dance forms, old and new, framed by a Prelude and a Postlude that have more in common than meets the casual eye. . ."

Hindemith's idea of free lyricism is not everybody's. Nevertheless it is surprising how greatly Hindemith's idiom asserts itself after a few hearings. Sometimes his music is apt to sound dry, and usually it is completely devoid of any sensuous charm. But it always has point, it always has logic, and it always has workmanship. After a while one becomes used to his perverse tonal relationship and, indeed, becomes rather fond of them. Whatever you may think of it, the man has style.

In "Ludus Tonalis," the writing is less crabbed-sounding than in some of his more recent music. It is completely pianistic, full of individual ideas, with the feel of a massive intellect behind them. No dilettantism here; this is solid music in the best Teutonic tradition. There is even

humor, of sorts, often suggested by a capricious turn of phrase, an unexpected development in the melodic line. All around, "Ludus Tonalis" is a masterly work: a little forbidding, perhaps, but worth getting acquainted with.

For the performance itself there can be nothing but praise. Bruce Simonds is on the Yale faculty, where Hindemith also teaches, and it can be assumed that he has worked at the piece with the composer. He is a well-equipped pianist, and his intelligent, spirited playing is backed by a thorough technique. The recording, too, is first-rate, being full in sound and clear in detail.

—H. C. S.

**LISZT:** Six Etudes after Paganini: played by **Robert Goldsand** (piano), Concert Hall Society long-playing disc CHC-10, price \$4.85.

**S**OME historical detail first: Liszt, heard Paganini as early as 1831, wrote these etudes during the next nine years. Like all of his contemporaries, Liszt was bowled over by Italian necromancer, and decided to attempt a translation of Paganini caprices in terms of the piano. So did Schumann and others. Liszt's is by far the most spectacular. Just as the Paganini caprices were the last word in violinistic technique, capable of being played only by the composer, so Liszt's equivalents held true. Liszt kept on revising them; later Busoni came aboard, bringing out an edition that made the fantastic more fantastic.

The six etudes transcribed by Liszt are (in the piano numbering): No. 1—Tremolo, in G minor; No. 2—Andante Capriccioso, in E flat; No. 3—"La Campanella," in B major; No. 4—"Arpège," in E minor; No. 5—"La Chasse," in E major; and No. 6—"Tema e variazioni," in A minor. The latter is the famous twenty-fourth "Caprice," upon which Brahms, Rachmaninoff and others erected substantial structures. There have been at once or another, individual recordings of all of these, but this is the first integral version with which I am acquainted. Goldsand, by the way, transposes the order. He plays Nos. 1, 4, 2, 3, 5, and 6. The label is misleading on this disc. No. 1, 4, 2, and 3 are on the first side; the others are on the reverse.

Even in this day of mighty technicians—and Goldsand is not among the least—the "Paganini Etudes" pose a tremendous challenge. Goldsand generally comes off right well, though here and there one feels

the strain imposed upon him. His version presents quite a few variants and cuts from my edition (Ricordi). However, there are several editions; and, anyway, every bravura pianist seemingly operates by an unwritten law where Liszt can be altered to suit individual needs.

I have said above that Liszt kept on altering these etudes. For the curious, or the student, it might be interesting to know that Goldsand plays the third version of No. 4, the second version of No. 2 (quite different from the fabulous Horowitz, disc), the second version of No. 5, and parts of the first and second versions of No. 6. His playing throughout is marked by admirable finesse. None but a complete technician could play the notes as he does. While one could conceive of a stronger reading, in which the bravura was pointed up to a greater extent—for, after all, these were written to glorify the pianist—there is no disputing Goldsand's sensitivity, and his happy knack of presenting a clear design. The recording, though a trifle blurred in spots, is entirely adequate.

—H. C. S.

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## LONG PLAYING RE-ISSUES

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We had anticipated reporting on some of Columbia's August Microgroove issues, but none arrived by the first of the month. It is of interest to note that Columbia in the August list is releasing its recent *Traviata* performance on three Microgroove discs. This should be a good seller. Inasmuch as chamber music fares extremely well in the Microgroove technique, let us consider several of these issues first.

The **Busch Quartet** version of Beethoven's **F major Quartet, Op. 59 No. 1** has gained in tonal coloring in its LP version (disc ML-4155 \$4.85). This sturdy and meaningful performance was first released in November 1943, at which time we hailed it as one of the finest and most satisfying sets made by the Busch ensemble. It is a

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welcome addition to the catalogue of LP issues. So too is the exceptionally fine performances of the Franck and Debussy **Violin Sonatas**, made by **Francescatti and Casadesu** (disc 4178, \$4.85). Not since **Thibaud** and **Cortot** played the familiar Franck A major have we had a more persuasive interpretation of this opus.

In the orchestral category, the transference of the Rodzinski version of **Bizet's** spontaneous and youthfully inspired **Symphony in C Major** has been effectively contrived. The clarity of the wind instruments and the glow of the strings are well substantiated (disc ML-2051, \$3.85). The **Mitropoulos-Robin Hood Dell Orch.** version of **Four Intermezzi**, from operas of Puccini, Mascagni and Wolf-Ferrari, have been coupled with Menotti's **Sebastian-Ballet Suite** on Microgroove disc ML-2053 (\$3.85). The transference is good, though in the Intermezzi there is a slight shrillness to the high strings. The attractively scored, though eclectic, ballet of Menotti fares best.

The **Ormandy-Philadelphia Orch.** versions of Johann Strauss's overtures to **Fledermaus** and **Gypsy Baron** and the waltzes, **Blue Danube** and **Tales from the Vienna Woods**, are coupled on Microgroove disc ML-2041 (\$3.85). This seems to us an all around first-rate job of re-recording and sales of this disc may well exceed the 78 versions of both items. Tonally full and rich are the transference of the Ormandy performances of the **Handel Water Music Suite** and the **Concerto for Orchestra in D major**, coupled with the **Corelli-Pinelli Suite for String Orchestra** (Microgroove disc ML-2054, \$3.85). For long-playing addicts, these issues may be "musts," but let it be said, while Ormandy gives competent performances, in all cases one feels the readings can be bettered.

Columbia is gradually getting around to transferring its longer sets to Microgroove records. The latest available, the **Sargent-Huddersfield Choral Society Liverpool-Philharmonic Orch.** performance of Handel's **The Messiah**, arrives on three discs (set SL-155, price \$14.55). Listening to a half dozen sections of the new version, we were impressed with the clarity and realism of the recording. It is both of interest and significance to find that Columbia are announcing for early release its fine performances of Brahms' **German Requiem** and Handel's **Twelve Concerti Grossi**, and also a new performance of

**Beethoven Ninth Symphony** by **Bruno Walter** and the **Philharmonic Symphony Orch. of New York**.

These are adventurous days for LP enthusiasts. Building a catalogue of these now much-coveted discs must be an intriguing business for all concerned. Perhaps the coupling of works will not always be wisely made, but this sort of thing has prevailed for long years in the record business. Among Concert Hall's new long-playing releases comes a surprise in the well-planned release of two of Henry Purcell's operatic suites from **The Gordian Knot** and **Abdelazar**. The former is played by the Saitenberg Little Symphony and the latter by Edvard Fendler and the Vox Chamber Orch. **Abdelazar** is a particularly fine example of the composer's instrumental operatic music and Concert Hall was wise to gain from Vox permission to couple it with their own Purcell suite. While the recording in both cases has been handled very well, there are evidences in the **Abdelazar** that the surfaces of the 78 records could not be completely eliminated.

Concert Hall's LP version of Prokofiev's **Quartet No. 2 in F major (Gordon String Quartet)** is a preferred job to the 78 version in our estimation (disc 8, \$4.85). Moreover, one's appreciation of the work is better sustained. Other recent LP discs of new works issued by Concert Hall are discussed elsewhere.

Mercury has released its fine performance of Mozart's **Divertiment in D major, K 251** coupled with its version of the Vivaldi **Concerto Grosso in D minor, Op. 3, No. 11** (disc MG 10002). Both works are played by the **Dunbarton Oaks Chamber Orch.**, with the violinist Alexander Schneider as leader. The recording of this disc boasts the Reeves-Fairchild Margin Control technique which is said to be superior in clarity and dynamic range. While one is willing to concede the reproduction is exceptionally fine, the superiority of this technique over that of Columbia's Microgroove does not manifest itself to our ears. Perhaps in more elaborate scores, Mercury's claims may be justified. Our associate, Anson Peckham, has rated the Mozart performance the best one on records. We concur with him. The Vivaldi, while played with finesse and style, seems less persuasive than other recorded versions of the work. Schneider's pace in the outer movements is on the fast side. Yet, as a program this disc proves most

pleasing and diverting and is a worthy replacement for the 78 versions of both works.

Admirers of Grofe's *Mississippi Suite* and Kern's *Mark Twain, Portrait for Orchestra*, will welcome Columbia's L.P. version of these works (disc ML-2046, \$3.85). Kostelanetz's orchestra is well served by the Microgroove technique.



**BELLINI:** *Norma* — *Ite sul colle, o Druidi*; **Ezio Pinza**, bass, with **Metropolitan Opera Chorus and Orchestra** conducted by **Fausto Cleva**. Columbia disc 72826-D, price \$1.00.

**COLUMBIA** appears to be trying to remake all of the selections that Pinza recorded for Victor during the early thirties. Last month they released King Philip's aria from "*Don Carlos*," this month it's the bass aria from the first act of "*Norma*." In these new recordings the arias have been recorded complete, whereas the early Victor versions were abbreviated.

Though Pinza does some beautiful singing in the slow, proclamative introduction, he cannot manage with ease, at this point in his career, the high tessitura in the quicker portion of the aria. And Fausto Cleva's fast tempo and inflexible beat do not help make Pinza's way any smoother. I am usually grateful to have arias recorded in their entirety, with a chorus when it's called for (as in this case), and so on. The Metropolitan Opera Chorus, however, at least on this record, makes my gratitude alter. I have seldom heard a professional organization that had less spirit, less discipline, or less tonal brilliance.

—C. J. L.

**BUONOCINI:** *Deh piu a me non v'asconde*; and **CACCINI:** *Amarilli*; **Suzanne Danco** (soprano) with piano accompaniment by **Phyllis Spurr**. London FFRR disc K2070, price \$2.00.

▲ The purity and beauty of this singer's voice is backed by rare musical intelligence. The singing is perfection itself. One seldom hears such lovely legato these days. Both songs are appealing, the first for its charming archness ("*Hide not from thy loving swain those charming lights appealing*"), the second for its intimate

tenderness and melodic purity. *Amarilli*, one of the best known of the old Italian madrigals of the 16th century, deals with a lover's concern for the doubts of his beloved. It is perhaps more rightly a man's song, and I recall the version made by the late Dinh Gilly wherein the artistry was at least equally appreciable. The piano accompaniments are played with gratifying artistic prudence, and the recording is excellent. London would do well to have Miss Danco make other Italian "*Arie antiche*" for our delectation.

—J. N.

**RACHMANINOFF:** *Vocalise*, Op. 34, no. 14; **RIMSKI-KORSAKOFF:** *The Rose and the Nightingale*, Op. 2, no. 2. **Lily Pons** (soprano) with orchestra conducted by **Andre Kostelanetz**. Columbia 72753D, price \$1.

▲ A piece of wordless vocal music like this of Rachmaninoff (and that of Ravel effectively presented by Jennie Tourel in her recent "*French Song Recital*") has to be done with great musical finesse as well as vocal appeal. For that reason I can hardly call this Pons record a success, for her line is unsteadily and her intonation unsure. The familiar Rimski-Korsakoff song, sung in Russian, is rather better, though it lacks the yearning quality such singers as Nina Koshetz or Maria Kurenko used to bring to it. The recording is good, bringing out some nice coloristic effects in the orchestra.

—P. L. M.

**THE RETURN OF THE WAYFARING STRANGER:** On *Springfield Mountain*; *Little Mohee*; *Troubadour Song*; *Lord Randall*; *Bonnie Wee Lassie*; *Colorado Trail*; *The Devil and the Farmer*; *Roving Gambler*; *John Hardy*; **Burl Ives** with his guitar. Columbia 10-inch set C-186, four discs, price \$2.85.

▲ America's roaming troubadour, Burl Ives, is known as "*The Wayfaring Stranger*." The song by that name has been used as his theme on the radio and elsewhere. Why this set is called "*The Return of the Wayfaring Stranger*" remains confusing, unless Columbia intends it as a return to Columbia records.

Of all the folk singers I have heard, Ives appeals to me most. His simple, unaffected artistry and evident geniality are backed up by a voice that is always pleasant to listen to. No one who admires the singer will wish to miss this set. It contains a wide cross-section of folk songs, with our own "*Springfield Mountain*" and

the appealing English "Lord Randall." The recording has an intimate realism which makes me feel Ives might be in the room.

—J. N.

**SMETANA: Dalibor** — Mein Zdenko, du hast wieder mich beschütze; Ach, welchen Zauber, welche Wonne. **Franz Völker** (tenor) with **Berlin State Orchestra**, conducted by **Gerhard Steeger**. Deutsche Grammophon 67603, \$2.50.

▲ These two arias from Smetana's little known opera make a welcome change in the tenor repertoire, especially as they are very beautifully sung. Völker's is one of the great dramatic tenor voices of our time, and the years have touched it lightly since the memorable days when he was recording so prolifically for Polydor. The first side is a thoughtful and expressive aria with a strikingly effective orchestral background; the second is exuberant and exciting. The reproduction is very good.

—P. L. M.

**STRAUSS, JOH. Jr.: The Bat**—Mein Herr Marquis and When I Play the Innocent Country Girl; **Erna Sack** (Soprano) with **German Opera House Orch.**, **Berlin**, conducted by **Rolf Schrieder**. Capitol-Telefunken disc 89-80087, price \$1.50.

**T**HIS is one of Miss Sack's most attractive records. She shows herself to be a "natural" for the role of Adele, and she sings the two arias with admirable musicianship. Of course, she puts in a few far-flung, top notes but these are fitted in places that are permissible. Almost any coloratura soprano who had similar top tones would claim the right to intrude or voice them where cadenzas are permissibly indicated by the composer. The recording is satisfactory.

—J. N.

**STRAUSS: Traum durch die Dämmerung; Liebeshymnus; Winterweihe; Morgen. Heinrich Schlusnus** (baritone) with **Berlin State Opera Orchestra**, conducted by **Gerhard Steeger**. Deutsche Grammophon discs 68131 and 68242, each \$2.50

**T**HE FOUR SONGS constitute probably the most impressive contribution to recorded lieder in several years, despite the fact that something of the songs' intimacy has been sacrificed in the use of the orchestrated piano parts. It so happens that these songs take well to the change, and if I am not mistaken the instrumentation is the composer's own. The first and last songs, of course, are among Strauss' best known, and both have en-

joyed great popularity in pre-war piano-accompanied recordings by Schlusnus. The singing in the new performance is if anything better, and there is admirable poise and finished phrasing. If one were to pick a flaw it would be a very occasional matter of intonation. The opening phrase of "Morgen" is more simply spoken in the new recording than the old, and the whole song has real expressiveness if not the trance-like atmosphere Elisabeth Schumann brought to it. "Liebeshymnus," a song in praise of love, and the not unsimilar "Winterweihe, have both been recorded by Karl Hammes (HMV EG-3953, EG-6213) but I prefer the Schlusnus voice, and in these pieces the rich orchestration seems definitely an improvement over the piano. The recording is spacious and excellently balanced.

—P. L. M.

**FOLK SONGS:** Blow the wind southerly; Ma bunny lad; The Keel row (Northumbrian, arr. Whittaker); Have you seen but a white lily grow (Elizabethan, arr. Sydney Grew); Willow, willow (Elizabethan, arr. Peter Warlock); The lover's curse; Down by the Sally Gardens (Irish, arr. Herbert Hughes). **Kathleen Ferrier** (contralto) and **Phyllis Spur**, (piano). London set LA 95, three 10-inch discs,

**T**HERE ought to be a special classification in musical performance to mark the distinction between the singing of genuine folk-ballad and the more artful treatment of folk music by concert singers. Miss Ferrier, of course, belongs in the

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latter category, yet with all the finish and polish of her singing of these songs, there is something disarmingly simple and elemental in it which sets her apart. The first song, a melody of uncommon appeal, is sung without accompaniment in so true a scale and with so gorgeous and expressive a tone that it would by itself justify the album. If in the selections that follow there is a tendency to polish up the corners a little too carefully, there is also an inescapable sincerity that seems to make everything right. When a strong and infectious rhythm is required, as in "The Keel row," Miss Ferrier can supply it in all magnificence. The exquisite "Have you seen but a white lily grow" (hardly by any stretch a genuine folksong) has rarely been done more handsomely, though I myself would prefer a less leisurely "tempo" and a stricter adherence to its pulse. "Willow, Willow," also a little on the ponderous side, wins me over in spite of myself, so genuine is the singer's feeling, and so elementally tragic the sheer sound of her voice. I can but regret, as I did recently on hearing Robert Merrill's even more polite collection of "Folksong," that the Hughes arrangement of the superb "Sally Gardens" has again been used instead of the more distinguished one by Benjamin Britten. Miss Spur's piano is quite properly unobtrusive, but it is always there, and well in the picture.

—P. L. M.

## In The Popular Vein

Enzo Archetti

**Having A Wonderful Wish and The Story Of My Life;** Columbia 38422. **I'm Gonna Wash That Man Right Outa My Hair** (from "South Pacific") and **Kiss Me Sweet;** Columbia 38487. **Forever and Ever and I've Been Hit;** A Rosewood Spinet and **Tara Talara Tala;** Columbia 38585. All by Dinah Shore with (a) Orch. directed by Harry Zimmerman, (b) Orch. directed by Sonny Burke, and (c) unnamed orch.

● A nice batch of Shores which runs the gamut of her talents and styles. She's best when she's frankly sentimental.

**The Goggle-Eye-Ghee and When I Lost You;** Columbia 38303. **All Right, Louie, Drop That Gun;** Columbia 38447. **Take 'Em To the Door and Waiting At the Church;** Columbia 38322. **Arthur Godfrey,** with Orch. directed by Archie Bleyer.

● The irrepressible Godfrey has a way with stuff like this. His sly brand of humor can excite some hearty guffaws where anyone else would probably not get a giggle. His secret is under-statement.

**Twister in the Slammer and Margie;** Capitol 15273. **St. Louis Blues and Cumaná;** Capitol 15107. **Barclay Allen and His Rhythm Four. Country Gardens and I Double Dare You;** Barclay Allen and His Orch. Capitol 57-562.

● Freddie Martin's erstwhile pianist has branched out for himself, and from these samples he is doing right well with his own groups. It does the heart good to hear some honest-to-godness jazz improvisation again, untainted by flatted fifths. The Rhythm "Four" consists of guitar, bass, and drums. The orchestra is not large, evidently standard make-up. But what's important, both groups lend excellent rhythmic support and point up well Allen's piano improvisations.

**Songs Without Words;** Paul Weston and His Orchestra. Capitol DCN-170, 3-10" discs.

● In this album Capitol sponsors a contest for lyrics to fit six tunes especially written for the contest by Johnny Mercer, Isham Jones, Livingston and Evans, Jimmy McHugh, Ray Noble, and Paul Weston.

All are ingratiating melodies, characteristic of each composer, well orchestrated and played by Weston. All except McHugh's are in slow fox (ballad) tempo. His is in rumba tempo. The tunes beg for words, and should be a cinch for anyone who can rhyme moon and June.

**Jolly Fella Tarantella and Ship Ahoy Polka;** Merrie Musette Orchestra. Victor 25-1128.

● For some inexplicable reason, the tarantella is gaining extraordinary popularity, but I have not yet seen it danced publicly. This tarantella is a parody. Its lyrics, sung by Gino Sperry in broken English, are fitted to a hodge-podge of more or less traditional tunes. The mess has verve. It's good fun if you don't take it seriously. The polka is almost as good. Very good recording.



**It's Too Late Now and The Four Winds and the Seven Seas;** Capitol 56-671. **There Isn't Any Special Reason and You're Getting To Be A Habit With Me;** Capitol 57-591. Mel Tormé with (a) Frank De Vol and (b) Sonny Burke and Their Orchestras.

● The Velvet Fog is his usual mooning self but this time his material is a little better. "The Four Winds" is really a novelty because of a mood created by special sound effects and a wordless women's chorus in the background. "There Isn't . . ." is his own composition and it is patterned after his style of singing. "You're Getting To Be . . ." is an oldie from the picture "Forty Second Street" and "It's Too Late Now" is sadly sentimental. A batch that should rate high with his admirers. The orchestras and Capitol have given him excellent support.

**Sunflower and Little Jack Frost Get Lost;** Ray McKinley and His Orchestra. Vocals by Ray McKinley, Jean Friley and Some of the Boys. Victor 20-3334.

**Sunflower and Red Hot Mama;** Deuce Springgens, with Tex Williams' Orchestra. Capitol 15405.

● The tributes to Kansas are radically different. McKinley's is a burlesque; phony accent, off-key singing, deliberately flatted notes and all. Spriggens' is at least straightforward, though as singing it hardly rates much. His orchestral support is authentic. The flipovers are by far more interesting. Spriggens' blues is really good with a first-rate barrel-house accompaniment. Ray's is a saucy jump number, but much more suited to his style.

**At the Café Rendezvous and You Can Have Him;** Capitol 57-670. **If You Could See Me Now and Blum Blum;** Capitol 15371. Peggy Lee, with Dave Barbour and (a) His Orchestra (b) His Dixieland Mand.

● Peggy and her husband, Dave, are currently wowing New York with personal appearances. These discs are typical of their work — good rhythm, good singing.

**I Do, I Do, I Do and Tennessee Waltz;** Victor 20-3434. **When You're In Love and Everywhere You Go;** Victor 20-3394. **Susy and Don't Gamble With Romance;** Victor 20-3368. Wayne King and His Orchestra. Vocals by Nancy Evans-Billy Leach, and The King's Jesters.

● The Wayne King waltz style is now almost tradition. It's loose, meandering

manner can be relaxing at times. Especially good as background order. The nostalgic "Tennessee Waltz" has a slight edge over the others. Good recording.

**D Natural Blues and Little Girl, Don't Cry;** Victor 20-3351. **Moanin' the Blues and How Could You Know;** Victor 20-3430. **I Ain't Got Nothin' To Lose and Tomorrow;** Victor 20-3495. Lucky Mil-linder and His Orchestra. Vocals by Paul Breckenridge, Big John Greer, Annistine Allen, and Jimmy Carnes.

● Only the blues have musical value but the performances of even these are loose and superficial. Sy Oliver's "I Ain't Got Nothing To Lose" is the only other number in the batch which rates mention, but again the performance is only passable.

**Hamlet and That's Loyalty;** Betty Hutton with Orchestra conducted by Joe Lilliley. Capitol 57-696.

● The first is sub-titled "by F. Loesser out of W. Shakespeare." Actually, it's a retelling of the tale in Brooklynese and bop. It should be heard to be believed. The reverse is also a Loesser. Both numbers are from the picture "Red Hot and Blue." The indefatigable Betty Hutton tears into them with gusto.

**Don't Cry, Baby and Hurry, Hurry, Hurry;** Columbia 38428. **Hatsville, U. S. A. and Summer Moon;** Columbia 38476. **Redigal Jump and Love;** Columbia 38476. **Redigal Jump and Love;** Columbia 38380. Harry James and His Orchestra.

● Whether it's jazz for jazz's sake, music for dancing, or just plain pops for the juke box, James still ranks high for clean, neat, interesting performances. Take this batch, for instance. The "Jump" is typical of his best for just listening. "Summer Moon" is the controversial Stravinsky composition which he has alternately owned and disowned. It still is a good sentimental song based on a theme from the "Berceuse" from "The Fire Bird." "Hurry, Hurry, Hurry" is juke box fodder. "Love" is an oldie with some of the sentimental bosh removed and some bounce added. The result makes good listening. "Hatsville," too, is danceable if inconsequential. There's plenty of James trumpet to satisfy everyone.

**Lazy Blues and Big Fat Sam;** Victor 20-3068. **Tell It To Me and Rose Room;**

Victor 20-3490. **I Wish Somebody Cared Enough To Cry and Texas Hop**; Victor 20-3408. **Needle Points and I'm So Doggone Melancholy**; Victor 20-3231. **Brooklyn Bounce and Cold Hearted Woman**; Victor 20-3379. **Corn Bread and Bewildered**; Victor 20-3326. Erskine Hawkins and His Orchestra. Vocals by Jimmy Mitchell.

● Nothing really sensational here, with the possible exception of "Rose Room" which has some swell clarinet, by Henry Heywood, but all are solid enough to be above the average as jazz. The blues and slow numbers are best because the soloists have a better chance to relax. Very good recording and extra slick surfaces. In one or two instances, the level of the perimeter is excessive with the result that, when played automatically, the tone arm slides off the disc instead of being guided to the first groove. This is the first time this difficulty has been encountered on Victor discs.

**Roseanna and A Sunday Out in the Country**; Freddy Martin and His Orchestra. Vocals by Merv Griffen and The Martin Men. Victor 20-3484.

● The first is a likeable tune by Frank Loesser for the picture "Roseanna McCoy." The second is a big swinging tune which invites unison singing. Both are nicely done by Freddy Martin, without exaggeration.

#### VICTOR 45's

**A Sentimental Date With Perry Como**; Perry Como with Orchestras directed by Russ Case and Lloyd Shaffer. WP-187, 3 discs. **Everytime I Meet You and Two Little New Little Blue Little Eyes**; 47-2919. **Let's Take An Old-Fashioned Walk and I Love You**; 47-2931. Perry Como with Mitchell Aires and His Orchestra.

**Dreamland Special**; Vaughn Monroe and His Orchestra. WP160. **Riders in the Sky and Single Saddle**; Vaughn Monroe and His Orchestra. 47-2902.

● For first releases on 45's, Victor has chosen well from the recordings of these two popular artists. All are typical, some even outstanding, like "Riders in the Sky" and "Two Little New Little Blue Little Eyes." But throughout their playing the thought persisted: "What advantage is there in hearing them on 45's?"

Technically, they are no better than the shellac discs. In fact, Victor's new super-smooth shellac is generally better because

some of these plastics have clicks. Acoustically, they are no better, in spite of Victor's advertising claims. So, unless one owns the special Victor player and changer to take advantage of the rapid changing (a debatable advantage, at best, for who wants to hear a series of different pop tunes by one artist in rapid-fire succession?) the only remaining advantages are storage and indestructibility. The individual listener will have to decide for himself whether these two factors are worth the expense and trouble of conversion.

Public resistance to these discs is probably as much psychological as it is due to a feeling of reentment for having been imposed upon. This small size record and bright colored plastics have long been associated with children's records — toys, playthings, for the nursery or kindergarten. In support of this contention, the reaction of my young son might be significant. When he first saw one of these small albums of discs, his remark was: "How cute."

#### COLUMBIA LP's

**Gene Krupa**; Gene Krupa and His Orchestra, CL-6017.

**Duchin Plays Tchaikowsky**; Eddy Duchin, piano, with vocal group and rhythm accompaniment, CL-6022.

**Frankie Carle and His Girl Friends**; CL 6018. **Frankie Carle Presents Roses In Rhythm**; CL 6032. Frankie Carle, piano, with rhythm accompaniment.

**Sequence In Jazz**; Woody Herman and His Orchestra, CL 6026.

● These are a different story. Not only are there the distinct advantages of storage and unbreakability but acoustically they are superior to the Columbia standard shellacs. Even though the numbers have been dubbed, the quality of the sound seems to have improved in the transition. This is a phenomenon noted by others reviewing classical records.

It might be debated that there is nothing desirable about 20 or 25 minutes of miscellaneous pieces by one artist but Columbia leaves an out by spacing each piece on the disc so that the numbers can be played selectively, if desired. In longer works, like "Summer Sequence" and "Lady McGowan's Dream" included in "Sequence In Jazz," the advantage is as obvious as with any work that should be played without interruption. Moreover, there is no mental reserve about LP's. Both size and speed have been accepted as standards for many years.

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